

TOGETHER WITH ONE VOICE

We Are a People of Hope - Part II

March 15, 2015 - Pastor Derwin L. Gray

- **Open in prayer.**
- **Introduction**
- The book of Romans was written to the church at Rome where enemies were brought together as one. Jews and Gentiles—everyone else—came together to be a witness to the world of God’s love, grace and mercy, consumed by the glory of God.
- How do you have hope when everything seems hopeless?
- Being a Christian doesn’t exempt you from suffering.
- To rejoice in suffering doesn’t mean we’re excited or happy to suffer. It means that God will use our suffering redemptively even though we can’t see it.
- He never wastes a hurt.
- Through our hurts and disappointments He is building us into the image of Jesus...that’s redemption.
- Our greatest growth comes when we can’t rely on anything or anyone other than Jesus.
- **Read and discuss Romans 5:3-5.**

YOU CAN REJOICE IN SUFFERING BECAUSE IT CAUSES YOU TO:

- **Rely on God’s presence.**
- **Read and discuss Psalm 23:4, Psalm 30:10-12 and Psalm 32:1-2.**
- **Psalm 23:4**
- The comfort of other people is wonderful, but God’s presence goes far beyond the comfort of others.
 - o Are you walking in a *shadow of death* situation right now? (Take time to pray for folks who are)
 - o Discuss the statement, *In order to have a shadow there must be light.*
 - o What or who are you looking towards to make your life happy?
 - o Do you rest in the truth that only Jesus can comfort you?
- **Psalm 30:10-12**
- Our joy is in the fact that we belong to God...the unchanging God remains the same and that’s where our joy must be found. He put our sins out of sight! He has cleared our record of guilt. We can live in complete honesty.
 - o When was the last time you were as passionate about Jesus as with other things in life?
 - o What happens when you root your joy in circumstances? In Jesus?
- **Psalm 32:1-2**
- We want to be a people who are Christ-centered....our joy is in Him alone because He lived a perfect life we couldn’t live, died the death we deserved, and came alive again so that He can live His life in and through us.
 - o How does receiving and believing the above statement change the way you look at your past, live in your present, and plan towards your future?
- **Rely on God’s provision.**
- **Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 12:7-8.**
 - o According to Numbers 33:55, what was probably Paul’s thorn in his flesh?
 - o God used a *messenger of Satan* to mature Paul. Discuss what that could mean in your life.
 - o Paul pleaded with God to remove his challenge—his thorn. What was God’s answer?
 - o Are you/have you been in a place in life where God’s answer to you is, *My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness*? Discuss what that looks like. (Hint: Jesus is Grace)

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- **Rely on God's power.**
- **Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10.**
- Don't buy the lie that you can only rely on yourself.
- Salvation isn't just about getting into heaven but it's also about Jesus getting into our lives here on earth.
 - o Discuss what the last section of this scripture can look like in your life. *Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*
 - o What happens when you accomplish everything but you're still suffering?
- The greater the enemy comes at you the greater Christ is in you.
- Don't ever stop being who God has called you to be.
 - o Who is the enemy trying to keep you from being?
 - o Pray for group members who are facing challenges in their lives that Christ will be made greater.
- **Soul-tattoo: Rely on God!**
 - o Write down your current suffering and put it in the envelope.
 - o Write on the envelope, "God's got this...and God is transforming me!"
- **Close in prayer.**

CALENDAR

Good Friday
Easter

April 3, @TC 521, 6 & 7:30pm
April 5

TC 521: 8:30, 10, 11:45am
TC RH - 9:30 & 11:15am

April 5, @ TC 521 & TC RH

Baptism

Next Steps

Newcomer Connection
Class 1: Who We Are

April 12, @ TC 521 & TC RH
April 19, @ TC 521